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ABSTRACT

This handbook is designed to assist the leadership of a professional association in its efforts to consolidate with other professional adult educational organizations. It has three parts. The first is a brief essay on the process of change. It considers the individual decision and the collective decision as well as other factors, such as the people involved in the decision, the nature of the change, and communication. Part 2 is a summary of issues that affiliate organizations have considered in their consolidation efforts. These include the change in status of the current organizations, changes to the constitution and by-laws, names, merger of existing leadership structures, and choice of the national professional associations with which to affiliate. Part 3 consists of three case studies that describe the successful consolidation efforts of three state affiliate organizations of the Adult Education Association (AEA) in Illinois, Pennsylvania, and South Dakota. (YLB)

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AEA

HANDBOOK FOR

AFFILIATE CONSOLIDATION

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been assembled to assist the leadership of your professional association in its efforts to consolidate with other professional adult education organizations. The handbook has three parts. Part 1 is a brief essay on the process of change. Part 2 is a summary of issues that affiliate organizations have considered in their consolidation efforts. Part 3 consists of several case studies that may be useful to you in so far as they describe the successful consolidation efforts of several state affiliate organizations.

We sincerely hope that this handbook will be useful to your organization. Your comments and suggestions are appreciated.

Ken Czisny
Editor

Part 1: Change and the Professional Association

The merger or consolidation of several organizations to form a new one is a change of significant magnitude and impact on all those involved. While most of us recognize the difficulty of implementing such changes, we typically approach such ventures with little forethought as to how the change can be facilitated or the factors involved in resistance. Worse yet, we often assume that once a vote is taken, the change is in force; yet history is full of examples of changes later abandoned, sabotaged or aborted.

The case studies provided in this handbook will show the many different dimensions of what appears to be on the surface the same change taking place in different contexts. It will be evident that simple rules cannot be devised which will guarantee a successful merger; each situation is unique and must be treated as a special case replete with its idiosyncrasies.

What then, can we do, short of hiring a professional change agent to oversee the process, to design a merger which will have some chance of success? This paper is intended to provide some general constructs which might serve as guidelines in that process.

THE CHANGE DECISION

A decision to merge involves decisions of individuals as well as of the group. Similar processes are involved, and both must occur for successful implementation.

The individual decision. Any change decision requires that the individual affected go through four steps:

Awareness/Knowledge: At this stage, the individual becomes aware of the possibility of a change and begins to acquire knowledge about the new idea. Most adult educators who are actively involved in their national and/or state

associations are aware of the "consolidation fever." In fact, it has been said that the recent national action was precipitated by the prior action of numerous state organizations over the last several years. People who are not aware of the possibility of change or who have no information about its ramifications will move no further toward adopting/accepting a change.

Persuasion: After gaining information/knowledge, the person begins to form an opinion about the desirability of a change. If it seems like a bad idea, the change process ends here, but if the person can be persuaded that the idea has some merit, the process continues.

Decision/Trial: In some change situations, the person can try out a new idea without making a permanent commitment to it. Since it's pretty hard to pass out free samples of a new organization, the trial idea is best accomplished in the merger decision through vicarious means. Experiences of other states can be communicated so that your members can "try on" the idea. Knowing all the details of the proposed organization can also help; deciding yes or no on the idea of a merger is quite different from deciding on a specific plan which can at least be mentally tried out. After trial, the individual decides to go with it or not. But even after a positive decision, the change may not be completely accepted.

Confirmation: The fourth step is one of indeterminate length. During the confirmation stage, the person decides whether the change is indeed all it was expected to be and decides whether to continue with the new idea. Disconfirmation decisions about merger could result in splinter groups forming, apathy and non-participation on the part of individuals, direct sabotage of group decisions by some individuals, etc. Confirmation on the other hand, would lead to active participation, a willingness to work out the problems that will surely arise without abandoning the new organization, and enthusiasm and high morale.

The Collective Decision. In collective decisions, most changes are made by group consensus. Voting is not a way of reaching consensus; in essence it is a power or authoritative method of bringing about change in which the power of the majority takes precedence over the minority. Even though a vote may finally decide your group's merger, if the process is approached through authoritative means (an in-group deciding to bring it to a vote with limited participation of the larger membership), the possibility of individual disconfirmation with all its risks is greatly heightened. The vote should ideally be an affirmation of consensus already achieved informally, and to understand that process, it might be helpful to examine the collective decision process.

Stimulation: Someone, often outside the group, brings up the idea of the change. This handbook might serve as the stimulator for a merger decision in your group. It sparks the individual decision process discussed earlier and gets some individuals interested in finding out more about the change which has been suggested.

Initiation: This step involves someone (or ones)--nearly always inside the group--proposing an actual plan for implementing the change. Obviously, initiators have moved through the individual process to the point of decision and are now interested in getting others in the group to support the change which they see as desireable.

Legitimation: Early on in the process, the initiator must get the formal and informal approval to proceed from the power holders in the group, who may or may not be people in official leadership positions. There are always legitimizers, however, and without their support, any new idea is doomed. A rule of thumb is that the earlier these legitimizers can be involved in the change planning, the more likely they will support it. The change, then, is not viewed as a threat to them--they are at least partial owners of it--and they will then put their influence to work to win support of other group members. Legitimizers are not always persuaded (each of them, remember, will also go through the individual change decision process) by logic or other rational tactics. The maintenance of the existing group, which is the source of their influence, control, and/or power, is a major motivator of legitimizers; they frequently see themselves as "protectors" of the existing group and have invested a great deal in its history. A merger is, in its essence, a decision which destroys two or more existing groups. Legitimizers of all groups involved need to feel that decisions are in the best interests of the in groups before they can support such changes. The contradiction is

evident and is the basis for much of the spoken and unspoken opposition to merger.

Communication: Initiators (often joined by other legitimizers) communicate the plan to the group. Members of the group go through the individual decision process to reach the point of individual decision.

Decision: The entire group reaches a collective decision regarding the change. An opportunity for expression of ideas and opinions is important here to allow members to learn how others feel about the change. If the group is a strong one, members will frequently change their opinions in order to support the emerging group decision. Such a process, of course, builds much greater and deeper allegiance to the change itself as members really commit themselves to it at least in part because they value their membership and affinity with the group's wishes. Change planners (initiators) should be willing during this stage to adapt their proposals so that the group can comfortably accept the final change. This process, in a merger decision being made by hundreds of people spread over a large geographic area, is costly and time consuming. The alternative, however, is that a hasty decision will be made which many group members cannot accept, and this leads to eventual disconfirmation.

Action: After the group decision, the group moves to implement the change. Since it is a group decision, participation should remain high (and planners should provide for high levels of involvement by all those wishing to participate) and the chances for continued adaptation remain high. Such flexibility is the key to successful changes of this magnitude; there are sure to be unanticipated problems and

unexpected complications which rigid adherence to a predetermined plan of action will magnify. A part of any merger then, should be the provision for on-going adaptation during the early years; the alternative is to abandon the whole plan because of failures of parts of it.

OTHER FACTORS

People. It should be clear that the success of a merger decision is based at least in part on the people involved in that decision. Are those people who are seen as advocates of the merger respected and trusted by the others in the group? Are those who control the group and its norms supportive of the change? Are they willing to allow information about the merger to reach the group members? Are all members given ample opportunity to participate in the decision not only in a final vote, but in developing the actual form of the merger on which a vote will be taken?

The change. The adoption can also be affected by the nature of the change itself. Specifically, at least four areas of concern should be addressed, and the proposed merger should be designed to take each of these into consideration if adoption is to be relatively smooth and quick.

1. Does the proposed organization provide a clear advantage over the status quo? What is the benefit to adopting this change? There are bound to be costs as well, but if the advantages are worth the costs, the merger can be seen as a positive move. In addressing this concern, advantages to the general idea of merger as well as to specific advantages of the new organization should be discussed. How will the new organization be more effective than its predecessors; how can problems existing with the current organizations be addressed?

2. Is the proposed organization compatible with the groups' values, goals, norms, etc.? For example, if there is a strong regional affiliation in your state, consider continuing a regional structure with which your members will be able to identify. Even significant changes which are compatible with group goals will be tolerated, especially if they are seen to be necessary to reach those goals.

3. Is the proposed organization easy to understand and to implement? If lengthy explanations are needed to help people understand how the new organization will function, they will retreat, believing that the old way, with all its faults, was at least simpler. Likewise, transition procedures should be simplified wherever possible.

4. Can positive effects of its adoption be easily observed? Vicarious observation, as discussed earlier, is one way to win support prior to actual implementation of a new organization. After that time, however, during the period of confirmation, repeated demonstration of the positive effects of the merger should be made to the members. This can be done through association publications increased membership, an improved professional image for the association, active involvement of more adult educators in high quality conferences, etc. The important point here is that members will be watching to see if this new idea works--the new organization cannot afford the luxury of an infancy and must burst into existence with what appears to be instant maturity--and highly visible maturity at that! If the positive effects of this merger are immediately apparent, the likelihood of rival factions staking out their claim on the professional community's allegiance is greatly reduced.

> Most members of that community will seek to associate themselves with a strong, positive, viable organization which is demonstrating that it represents the field effectively and appropriately.

Communication. One last area to consider in planning toward merger decisions is the type of communication channels which are used throughout the change process. One-way channels (newsletters, other written communication) are the easiest to use with professional associations, but while such channels are effective in the knowledge stage of the change process, they are not very effective in helping people to form positive attitudes about complicated changes such as a merger. Such decisions really require two-way communication channels which allow the group members to hear other people's ideas, ask questions, make suggestions and otherwise participate in dialogue about the proposed change. Some of the two-way methods you might explore include telephone networks (frequently available on a state-wide basis through the state university or cooperative extension service), rap groups at conferences, sending representatives to staff meetings in programs with large memberships, inviting correspondence through letters, questionnaires, and other reactive instruments. The more people who can be involved, even in the tedious chore of writing a constitution and bylaws, the more satisfied they will be with the outcome, and the more satisfactory the outcome is likely to be. Above all, those who are advocating for merger and overseeing the change process must remeber that the merger will only be as strong as all the members believe it to be. Rigidity and inflexibility will doom the process--an openness to dissent and constructive reaction to legitimate concerns will go a long way toward ensuring its success.

At the risk of sounding professorial, I am suggesting several references which you may wish to use as you develop your strategies for approaching the task ahead. And have no doubt that planning is a crucial element in the management of a merger. The subtleties and complexities of the joining of complex organizations demand careful thought, skillful planning and on-going nurturing. Whether you function as a stimulator, initiator, or legitimizer, recognize that at different points in the decision process, different kinds of assistance are needed. Problem solving and solution giving have their place, but more frequently facilitating the process of decision-making and implementation of the change by drawing on the principles presented here will lead to more enduring merger decisions.

Odiorne, G. S. The Change Resistors. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1981.

Rogers, E. M., & Shoemaker, F. F. Communication of Innovations. New York: The Free Press, 1971.

Zaltman, E., Florio, S. H., & Sikorski, L. A. Dynamic Educational Changes. New York: The Free Press, 1977.

Part 2: Some Questions and Answers

Most affiliate organizations will find themselves considering some of the following questions when they ponder the issue of consolidation.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MERGER AND CONSOLIDATION?

A merger occurs when one organization "merges into" a second organization. When this occurs, there is only one "surviving" organization. A consolidation occurs when both organizations dissolve and a new organization is established. In either merger or consolidation, the new organization may use a name that is the same, similar or completely different from one or both of the original organizations.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE CURRENT ORGANIZATIONS?

The status of the current organizations may be influenced by two factors: the current legal status of the organizations (whether one or both at incorporated) and the current tax status of each organization.

Incorporation. Incorporation is a State function with the responsibility usually vested in the office of the State's Attorney General. It is important to know if one or both of the existing organizations are incorporated because it may be necessary to dissolve the corporation(s) before creating a new entity. If this were not done, you could find yourselves with three adult education professional associations. It is recommended that an attorney be retained if one or both of the organizations are incorporated.

Tax Status. Determining an organization's eligibility for exempt tax status is a process that is handled by the Internal Revenue Service. Application is made to the IRS District Director. The process usually takes about 60 days. It is not necessary for your organization to be incorporated in order for it to receive tax exempt status. Application forms and general information are available from most IRS offices (ask for publication 557).

If one of the organizations has a favorable tax status that the new organization may be unable to receive because of its Constitution and By-Laws or current Federal restrictions, the organizations may want to consider merger rather than consolidation. If neither organization has a tax status that could be attained by the new organization, the organizations might want to consider consolidation.

One of the biggest advantages to being an exempt status organization is that the organization will qualify for a refund of income taxes paid (from the date that the application is made) and a reduction in mailing costs. The cost of mailing organizational materials may be substantially reduced after the organization files an application (U.S. Post Office Form 3624). A copy of the organization's Constitution and By-Laws and, the IRS letter of determination of tax exempt status, must accompany the application.

WILL THE NEW ORGANIZATION BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONTRACTS AND DEBTS OF THE OLD ORGANIZATIONS?

In mergers and consolidations of non-profit corporations, the old corporations cease to exist except in so far as the approving authority (State) directs. The new corporation assumes all of the obligations and liabilities of the constituent corporation (of Klein v. Fisher Foods, Inc., 6 Ohio Misc. 84, 216 N.E. 2nd 647 [1965]). Consolidations (of corporations without State approval is unlawful (of Jones and Phea, 130 Va. 345; S.E. 814 [1921]).

DO WE NEED TO REWRITE OUR CONSTITUTION, BY-LAWS; OR BOTH?

The current thinking in this area suggests that the Constitution should contain information that the organization will (in all probability) rarely change. The By-laws, on the other hand, should contain information that the organization

will periodically change, i.e. the amount of the membership dues.

WHAT SHALL WE CALL OUR NEW ORGANIZATION?

A major consideration in naming your new organization might be that the name of the organization should reflect the purposes of the organization. This is a delicate area however, because the organizations' purposes cannot be too "creative" in so far as they will be a determining factor in deciding the organization's tax status. Some affiliate organizations have decided therefore, that the affiliate organization should reflect its major national affiliation.

HOW CAN EXISTING LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES BE MERGED?

This is perhaps the most difficult problem that the organizations will face. It is most difficult to meet the needs of organizations as loosely structured and with memberships as diverse as most affiliate organizations. However, adult educators are known for accomplishing much in the face of great adversity and diversity and, therefore, perseverance will win out. Several ideas on process may be useful.

1. Make certain that your membership is aware of the reasons for consolidation. Do your homework before the membership is asked to vote on consolidation.
2. Try to obtain as much input from your memberships in as many different forms as possible. In this way you can identify trends and groups of supporters or detractors.
3. Use the talents of those individuals who are blocking your efforts to consolidate. Sometimes these individuals are useful sub-committee members. Don't ignore them; they are asking to be included in the process.

4. Try to ensure that the unique needs of each organization are met by the new organization. If this does not happen, the new organization may find itself divided at a later time.
5. Try to have joint committee meetings at least once a month to ensure constant contact between the elected leaders of both organizations. A formal consolidation committee will be very important to the new organization as will a written history of the discussions that preceeded the consolidation. Therefore, the joint consolidation committee should have a charge, an agenda, a chairperson and written minutes.
6. Don't establish a timetable for the consolidation process and then be so task oriented that you stick to the timetable no matter what problems arise. Listen to your constituency; they elected you to lead, not to be a ramrod.
7. Use your organizations' newsletters constantly to provide the membership with information about the consolidation process. The dissemination of information on a regular basis is critical to the success of your endeavour.
8. Disseminate information about the consolidation in as many ways as possible, i.e. provide copies of the proposed Constitution (and booklets with questions and answers about the Constitution) to members; use a retreat situation for Joint Board member discussions; use your State's teleconferencing network for membership input.
9. Use the network of affiliate organizations to assist you in your consolidation efforts. Perhaps a member of an adjoining affiliate organization can act as a catalyst/facilitator.

WHAT NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS SHOULD WE AFFILIATE WITH?

Each national professional association has strengths and weaknesses. It is a responsibility of your association's leadership to determine what the needs of the membership are at the time that national affiliation is being considered and what the future needs of the organization might be. A few benefits that could be realized by a local, state or regional professional association that chooses to affiliate with a national professional association are outlined below. (Adopted from the 1981 Report of the AEA Task Force on Affiliate Relations)

1. The affiliate organization becomes part of a national federation of adult education organizations.
2. The constituency of the affiliated organization can receive the benefits of political activity undertaken by the national association.
3. The affiliated organization becomes associated with the professional image of the national association.
4. The affiliate can receive leads for membership recruitment from the national association.
5. Members of the affiliate can more easily fill leadership roles in the national association.

Just a few additional points that you should consider when drafting a new Constitution and By-laws.

1. Draft consolidation or merger agreements with care and in detail.
2. Beware of infringements on individual rights when making Constitutional amendments.
3. Do not try to obtain, by amendment, powers that were not originally obtained.
4. Include rules for changes when you draft by-laws. Preferably, put these rules in the by-laws.
5. Remember the rights of your members.

Part 3: Case Study: Illinois

Background

The AEA/USA affiliate, the Illinois Adult Education Association (IAEA), was founded in 1937 and had been identified as the state professional association for adult educators working primarily in higher education. In the mid-sixties, a group of adult education administrators involved in the new federal adult basic education programs who were concerned about the professional development of adult basic education teachers formed a new organization specifically to meet those needs. Thus, in 1965, the Public Adult and Continuing Educators Association (PACE) was incorporated and affiliated with NAPCAE. The two organizations co-existed for nearly a decade with little or no collaboration, and many Illinois adult educators belonged to both. PACE grew rapidly to a peak membership of about 450 (dues $5), held regional and statewide conferences focused primarily on teaching techniques and other issues related to adult basic education, and (primarily through the involvement of a small cadre of local administrators) began to develop an active interest in legislative activities. IAEA was viewed as more stable and conservative; its membership hovered between 200 and 275 (dues were also $5); its primary activity was an annual conference.

In 1973 funding for the public aid programs was nearly lost in the legislature. Adult educators from both organizations staged an impressive rally and lobbying campaign which is proudly credited as having saved the local adult basic education programs (most of which were to some degree dependent on public aid referrals and funding to exist at their current levels). This event led to a realization among key leaders in both groups that a pro-active legislative stance was needed and would have to be substantially funded. An elaborate and creative plan was instituted whereby an adult educator in Illinois

would belong to both organizations (single membership was not an option) for a membership fee of $25.00. Each organization received $5 and $15 was allocated to the United Coalition for Legislative Action (UCLA), a separate body composed of three members of the PACE and IAEA boards. At the end of a transitional period, the following situation existed in April, 1975: PACE and IAEA held their joint annual conference and installed their separate executive boards; each had a membership of approximately 500, and the two membership lists were identical; executive board meetings were held simultaneously with the boards meeting together to discuss matters related to legislation, membership and the annual conference.

The situation would appear ideal for merger. Nonetheless, it was a four-year process to bring it about. Strong identification with the PACE mission and images, fear of diluting commitment to ABE programs as a result of an "umbrella organization" identity, and a degree of regional factions within the state contributed to the complexity of the process.

A Chronology

A Recognized Need

By the time of the spring conference in 1977, the seeds for merger had begun to germinate. Leaders from both organizations could see many advantages, especially in the area of eliminating duplication of services (such as two newsletters) and in creating a unified identity for the adult education professional community. The joint membership plan led to confusion among potential members, and, even more importantly, among the legislators and governmental agencies with which UCLA was more and more aggressively involved.

Providing Information

A general session was planned at the 1977 annual conference to explore the idea of merger. The history of IAEA, PACE, and UCLA was presented; membership trends were explored; and a representative from Minnesota, where a merger had been effected several years earlier, shared their experiences.

Membership Involvement

The 200 who attended that session were invited to ask questions and/or react to the ideas presented and then were provided a written questionnaire to complete. While less than 100 questionnaires were returned, they overwhelmingly supported the idea that the PACE and IAEA boards pursue the idea of merger.

A Planning Mechanism

The boards decided that a special committee should be established to develop a proposal for merger. Each board appointed five individuals (including the Presidents and Presidents-elect) and a joint chairperson was appointed. Identification of the committee was a lengthy, complicated process as the boards felt a need to represent, as completely as possible, the various constituencies within the total membership, and secure a commitment from appointees to participate actively in the extensive work of the committee. After much discussion about the real meaning of the 1977 survey (to which less than 20% of the members had responded), the board clarified the charge to the committee. Its' task was to develop a proposed constitution and by-laws to which the membership could react; the thinking was that a wider "vote" on the idea would be polarizing and that members could respond more intelligently to a specific plan.

The Process

Over seven months of active work were required to develop the document that was eventually submitted to the membership. Key strategies were to provide numerous opportunities for input from the boards and from the membership, to view the process as an on-going one with revision always possible, to listen to and seriously consider every opinion and idea presented (even if it obviously was a minority view), and to focus on the goals of a single state organization and determine what kind of structure would best allow it to meet those goals (the existing constitutions of PACE and IAEA--as well as other state organizations--were considered resources, rather than documents to be "merged," combined, or

compromised). In addition to developing the constitution and by-laws, the committee also planned the procedures for dissolution of IAEA and PACE, adoption of the IACEA constitution and incorporation of the new organization, and the transitional mechanisms. Following is a brief, approximate chronology:

February, 1978: First meeting of constitution committee.

June, 1978:

1. First draft presented to Boards which approved distribution to membership. Never did the Boards take a position (such as endorsement) of the proposal; the feeling was that this would be prejudicial and could be seen as an attempt to "railroad."
2. Draft of constitution and by-laws sent to members who were invited to write to any committee member with their reaction, comments and suggestions, and/or to participate in a statewide telephone conference using the Cooperative Extension Service telephone network. While response came from relatively few members, the suggestions made were helpful, the concerns raised were legitimate and led to additional changes, and the potential criticism of not involving the membership was successfully defused.

July-August, 1978: Committee revised the documents based on board and membership input. Legal counsel was retained for issues of dissolution, incorporation, etc.

September, 1978: A two-day retreat for both boards was held. In joint meeting as a committee of the whole the entire document was read, section by section, and revised again.

October-November, 1978: Document was printed and a question-and-answer sheet was developed to answer basic questions in a factual way (again, the board had voted only to present the documents to the membership for a vote, not to recommend adoption or rejection). Voting procedures were developed according to legal requirements (since IAEA was not incorporated, but PACE was, the dissolution process was a complicated procedure which had to be done in accordance with state law).

December, 1978: Constitution and By-laws, Question-and-Answer Sheet, and Voting Materials and Instructions were mailed to members.

January 12, 1979: Membership meeting held to vote on dissolution of IAEA and PACE. Proxy votes from members not attending were counted, and those present recorded their votes. IACEA was approved, 186-14.

Membership mailing was prepared which included announcement of results, information on nominations for IACEA officers, and a logo contest (alternate materials were available had the results been different).

Incorporation documents signed.

January-April, 1979: Nominations made for IACEA board, logo selected by IAEA and PACE boards, membership brochures, cards and letterhead designed and printed, a new membership directory and a constitution and by-laws printed for distribution at annual conference.

April 9, 1979: First Annual Conference of IACEA:

Election results announced; new officers installed.

January, 1982: IACEA is alive and well with 800 + members, an annual operating budget of nearly $30,000 and a credible and effective record in the legislature. There is no great dissension or factionalization in the professional community and the first constitutional amendments are being proposed to change the fiscal year, change the term of officers to coincide with the fiscal year and make minor changes in one membership category and in the election procedure.

Analysis

Rather than examine here the specific provisions of the new organization (which can easily be seen by reviewing its constitution and by-laws), identification of key issues to be addressed in the PROCESS seems more appropriate.

(1) The background of the existing organizations must be considered; the amount of concern, fear, opposition, etc. should be carefully looked at--the more there is, the longer the process is likely to be and the more essential the need for involvement.

(2) A carefully selected committee which is trusted and respected is an essential part of the process. In Illinois, it was helpful to include several current and past officers as well as newer members of the organization who provided a different perspective.

(3) Focusing on the goals of the new organization (i.e., what should the organization do) was a constructive approach which freed the committee from allegiance to either existing organizational structure.

For example, one goal was to provide opportunities for professional development. Discussion of the diverse needs and interests of the members led to the development of interest sections, which neither predecessor organization had had. Nomination and election procedures were different from either, standing committees are different, and even some statewide officers and responsibilities are different. The new organization is indeed new rather than a combination of bits and pieces of its parents.

(4) Continued communication between the committee, the board and the membership was essential to the successful development of the documents and to generating informed opinions about the proposed merger.

(5) This was a costly project; the board committed funding for committee travel and other expense, printing of two complete drafts (June and December) and supplementary informational materials, postage for two membership mailings, printing of the approved constitution in booklet form, and legal counsel.

(6) Legal counsel was essential. The technicalities of incorporation and constitutional language which affects issues such as tax status, acquisition of assets and liabilities, contractual agreements, etc. cannot be correctly handled without such advice. We contracted with an attorney who was the spouse of one of our board members who provided us with excellent, reliable counsel at about 1/4 the going rates. She continues to serve on an as-needed basis.

(7) Successful merger involves more than developing and adopting a new constitution and by-laws. The following issues were addressed in Illinois and contributed toward our success.

(a) Carefully designed transition procedures which fit our situation. Because the process had been underway for so long and because we felt a year-long transition would generate new dissatisfaction and/or concern, our transition period lasted only three months. Issues such as elected officers whose terms extend beyond the date of dissolution and carry-over membership must be addressed.

(b) Initial leadership should come from seasoned leaders who are committed to the successful merger. Identification of candidates for the first election is critical. Mistakes on the part of new officers would be terribly costly.

(c) The new organization cannot crawl onto the scene. Its image should be clearly established from the outset; it must be clear that it is strong, viable and "is where the action is." An aggressive birth will ward off any potential split from the ranks (which would be disastrous) and will also help recruit new members. The guiding premise should be that from its very inception, the new organization is better and stronger than its predecessors.

(d) The Constitution Committee remained intact for one year after adoption. They served to interpret the documents, to monitor their implementation and to analyze the need for amendments. The only amendments made after the first year were to make two transitional positions (V.P. for Regions and V.P. for Sections) permanent statewide officers. No further amendments were made until the proposals mentioned earlier (January, 1982).

Case Study: Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Association for Adult Education was organized in 1935, largely at the instigation of Mr. A. W. Castle, Pennsylvania Department of Education. Many of the members were teachers affiliated with a variety of Works Progress Administration courses under the Roosevelt program. At that time, Pennsylvania had immigrant schools in its larger cities, Standard Evening High Schools in a large number of communities, and shortly thereafter obtained ear-marked funds for adult basic education and high school equivalency through the office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The organization was never strong, averaging probably 75 members for more than 30 years.

In 1964 a number of PAAE members felt that they needed a closer tie with the National Association of Public Continuing and Adult Education, and formed the Pennsylvania Chapter, PAPCAE. Some of the people forming PAPCAE maintained their membership in PAAE, but it was clear that the move did not strengthen the parent organization at first. Within two or three years, however, it seemed that the ABE/GED group had grown to about the size of the AEA affiliate, which had retained most of its pre-PAPCAE membership.

Both of these organizations continued to make the common but serious error of "preaching to the faithful." They were naive regarding political activities, they had little knowledge of how to reach the public through the communications media, and consequently had to be satisfied with the most meager financial crumbs.

In 1978 PAAE and PAPCAE merged, forming the current single state adult education organization, PAACE. The motivation leading to this reunion is not entirely clear, yet almost every member involved in the rejoining of the groups seems to think he or she understands it. There seems to be a realization brought about

by the times, and particularly by two or three astute members, that unless we united we would probably perish separately. There was some sense that the world was ready for a considerable upsurge in adult education activities of all kinds, and that a new voice was needed in Pennsylvania for the movement. Some people with dual membership saw no sense in paying fees to belong to two very weak organizations. A larger number of post-secondary institutions, including Pennsylvania's fourteen community colleges, fourteen state-owned colleges, and a large number of private colleges and universities saw that part-time students, whether attending courses with or without college credit, were ready to attend the main campus or would require instruction at distant locations.

Loss of a number of Pennsylvania industries to the Sun Belt, and the realization that many of our workers did not have skills and knowledge to attract light manufacturing, particularly involving the silicone chip field, resulted in increased demand for employee training, and training anticipating new industry.

Thus far, PAACE has had two presidents from the ABE/GED aspect of adult education, and two from higher education, one being a community college. The in-coming president also represents higher education, but the president-elect is from a state hospital working with mentally handicapped adults. More importantly, the first four presidents showed remarkably good leadership, restructuring the organization, increasing the attractiveness of the annual Mid-Winter Adult Education Conference (registration at this conference averages 745) and establishing an effective Legislative Committee.

Case Study: South Dakota

Introduction

The following is a brief description of the process followed in the merger of an adult education organization and a community education organization in South Dakota. This was accomplished during the period 1973-1981. This information was learned from personal contact and discussions with a variety of persons involved, the review of meeting minutes and an examination of pamphlets, brochures, and newsletters of the organizations.

Background

South Dakota is a large state ranked 16th in terms of land area comparison with other states. The nature of the state is rural with few major population centers. These characteristics have a significant influence on the activities of all professionals searching for personal growth and development, however the concern here is with educational professionals, specifically adult and community educators. An additional consideration in this area is the representation of a major population group on the nine American Indian Reservations in the state. This represents approximately 40,000 persons in a population of 690,000 South Dakotans.

A unique characteristic of rural areas is a strong affinity for affiliation with others through groups and/or organizations. This has been described in the literature as affiliation or coalition processes with the principal point made that strength is additive and that the strength of collaborating groups is roughly equal to the sum of the strength of its members. A common but inappropriate declaration that "there is strength in numbers" is not a sufficient explanation of this phenomenon since this statement is representative of a political circumstance, rather than a coalition phenomenon.

Among professionals who join together, the organization/association serves as the focal point for communication and understanding about the affairs of the profession. The members look to meeting regionally and statewide for both formal and informal communications. This is prevalent across professional lines in the state of South Dakota throughout the year and in most parts of the state. In addition to this, some members look to the organization to assume responsibilities for contact with the legislature as well as to provide other support from social and personal contacts.

Affiliations

Records pertaining to the early formation of the South Dakota Adult Education Association point out that the group was organized in 1973. This interested group of educators indicated early in their minutes that they were seeking a broad base of representation involving museums, libraries, schools and a variety of areas in the field. Much of this early work focused on membership building and input from adult educators on the statewide use of the continuing education unit. At the September, 1974, meeting of the association, the organization decided to affiliate with the Missouri Valley Adult Education Association, a seven-state organization recognized as the oldest regional adult education body. Another affiliation was proposed in March, 1975. This time it was proposed that the association affiliate with the Adult Education Association of the United States of America (AEA-USA). This proposal was deferred and has not been acted upon.

The strong sense of affiliation and joining together with others continued. Apparently the leadership of the association perceived that the community education unit (C.E.U.) was one means for pulling all adult educators together. Records show that a State C.E.U. Plan that was continuously refined by the association and dominated much of the organization's efforts.

An affiliation was also consumated with the South Dakota Vocational Association (S.D.V.A.). This was accomplished in August, 1977, whereby the S.D.V.A. recognized through a formal resolution, that the South Dakota Adult Education Association should be a division of the association. This affiliation was suspended for two years at the 1981 association meeting.

In 1980 the South Dakota Community Education Association was organized. Under the auspices of the Community Education Development Center at the University of South Dakota, this organization was created to respond to the professionals in community education across the state. The formation of the association took place at the first Statewide Community Education Conference held in Pierre, South Dakota, in April, 1980. At this session a task force was established for the organization and development of a constitution and by-laws of the association. At this same meeting a resolution proposed by an ad hoc committee was brought forward by the president of the South Dakota Adult Education Association "asking community educators to join them in forming a combined organization." It was accepted by the community educators.

Subsequently a representative joint task force representing both organizations was formed and charged with the responsibility of bringing together both organizations. Specifically, this meant revising, combining, and formalizing a constitution and a set of by-laws for a combined organization. The task force worked out the details and developed a tentative constitution and by-laws for the 1981 state conference. The new organization was officially formed at the joint business session of both organizations and an election was held for the officers, board members, state liaison to the National Community Education Association and the Missouri Valley Adult Education Association. This new organization was called the South Dakota Adult, Continuing and Community Education Association.

Combining Forces

In reviewing the process that lead to the combined organizations into one group the following major points appear:

1. A commitment by all community, continuing, and adult educators to be open to merger and to follow through once the merger was made.
2. Representative participation by all those affected by the merger. Officers and members were represented in the joint task force as well as encouraged to participate at business meetings where the merger was explored.
3. Overlapping memberships by members of both organizations facilitated communication and understanding about the interests, positions and the process of merger.
4. The state conference provided a powerful mechanism for bringing the two groups together. This was apparent in discussions that showed the following:
   a. Programs of interest to both groups would make the conference bigger, interesting and provide learning experiences of quality and substance.
   b. Financial concerns at the local level for programs meant that limited funds required that persons with dual responsibilities (community and adult educators) must make a choice, with sufficient attendance at either conference potentially jeopardized.

In conclusion, the effectiveness of the merger in terms of orderliness and satisfaction by all concerned, recognizes a point made earlier. The point that strength is additive; the sum of the strength of its members is equal to the strength of collaborating members is apparent in the strengths of the new association. The South Dakota Adult, Continuing and Community Education Association is a strengthened organization that is moving toward greater participation and

professionalization of all practitioners in South Dakota. This is apparent from its leadership, its membership, and its goals for the future.